

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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May 8, 2008

The Honorable Michael D. Griffin
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
300 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20546

Dear Administrator Griffin:

Organizations and functions under your direction are categorized as high risk programs by the Government Accountability Office (GAO). While progress in addressing identified problems pertaining to contract management within the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has been made, these programs were designated as being at high risk in 1990 and continue to be so today.

I am writing to express my concern that these programs continue to be designated as high risk after 18 years. With NASA expecting to spend nearly \$230 billion over the next two decades to implement the President's 2004 Vision for Space Exploration, prompt action is critical. It is well understood that institutional change is often complex and takes both time and resources to transform these often unwieldy programs. However, strategic planning and budgeting can yield staggering results with disciplined management and oversight. As Administrator, you are uniquely positioned to guide this process.

NASA currently has 21 reports with multiple issues identified by the GAO that remain outstanding. What actions has NASA taken to address these issues and achieve removal from the GAO high risk list in January 2009? Your prompt response is greatly appreciated.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or Sheldon Shoemaker of my staff at (202) 228-6476 if you would like to discuss these concerns or other matters.

Sincerely,



CLAIRE McCASKILL
United States Senator